

Report to	<b>Audit Committee</b>
Date	<b>16 December 2024</b>
Lead Officer	<b>Justin Evans, Assistant Chief Fire Officer</b>
Contact Officer	<b>Jack Millward, Procurement &amp; Contracts Manager</b>
Subject	<b>Training Centre Consultancy Procurement Proposal</b>



## **PURPOSE**

- 1 This paper presents to Members the proposed procurement strategy for the appointment of consultancy professionals for the new training centre project.

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 2 Following approval of the new training centre business case, a procurement route for appointing key consultancy professionals through a public sector framework is being sought.
- 3 Public sector frameworks ensure compliance with procurement regulations, enabling direct award to specialist suppliers of principal consultancy services.
- 4 Principal consultants are essential for advancing the project and progressing the necessary Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) stages.
- 5 An appropriate principal consultant can be procured through a compliant public sector framework to provide professional expertise to meet the scale and requirements of the project.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6 Members are asked to:
  - i) Endorse the proposed compliant procurement route of professional consultancy services through a public sector framework;

## **PROCUREMENT OF DESIGN CONSULTANTS**

### **Consultancy Appointment**

- 7 Following North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's (the Authority) approval of the business case for the new training centre on 21 October 2024, work has commenced to appoint the primary supplier for design and consultancy activities. It is proposed that we use an identified framework that provides access to Architects, Structural Engineers, Quantity Surveyors, Employer's Agents, and Building Services Engineers.
- 8 For other services such as RIBA Stages 0 and 1, Principal Designer (Building Regulation), Civil Engineer, Planning Consultant, and BREEAM, fixed fee quotations are built up using tendered hourly rates once the project scope is known, prior to entering a contract. The price calculation is carried out on an open book basis, which is auditable. The tendered rates are confidential at this stage but can be shared upon signing a confidentiality agreement. It is confirmed that these rates are competitive in the current marketplace.
- 9 This framework has been used by various Fire and Police Services to appoint consultants for Fire Station and Training Centre projects, as well as for feasibility studies previously carried out for the Service. It has also been successfully used to procure consultants for Greater Manchester, Lancashire, and Cheshire Fire and Rescue Services to support their construction projects. The framework provides the option to develop the consultant team within the tendered prices, utilising consultants with extensive previous experience in Fire Stations and Training Centre projects.
- 10 Benefit of utilising framework:
  - Procured via a two-stage restricted process, the framework complies with Regulation 28 of the Public Contracts (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) Regulations 2015;
  - market tested prices;
  - flexibility of consultants and scope of service;
  - experience of undertaking fire station and training centre projects;
  - consultants previously employed to develop the scheme for approval;
  - open book price calculation;

- flexibility to add other consultants as the project progresses e.g. Clerk of Works (COW);
- allows the use of small medium enterprise consultants;
- Framework level Social Value targets;
- ability to negotiate local Social Value targets to align with The Well-Being Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015;
- Public sector framework Champion status within the Construction Leadership Council's Carbon Reduction Code;
- framework fee included within quoted rates;
- appointment is quick with consultants typically being appointed two to three weeks after initial enquiry; and
- North Wales Fire and Rescue Service (the Service) have previously utilised the framework for feasibility studies.

#### 11 Risks and issues of utilising framework:

- Single sourcing, i.e. no mini competition to reopen the procurement;
- Fire Engineer cannot be appointed for insurance reasons; and
- Ecologist cannot be appointed via this framework

12 The benefits of using a framework outweighs the risks and therefore it is recommended that this is the preferred procurement route.

### IMPLICATIONS

<b>Wellbeing Objectives</b>	This report links to the North Wales Fire and Rescue Authority's (the Authority) long-term well-being objectives. Ensures that the procurement of the consultancy professionals is compliant and supports the Service's commitment for excellence.
<b>Budget</b>	Budget associated with these consultancy services have previously been included in cost projections and cashflow analysis presented to the Authority.
<b>Legal</b>	The regulatory framework is set out via Welsh Government and UK legislation, as well as internal contract procedure rules.
<b>Staffing</b>	None
<b>Equalities/Human Rights/Welsh Language</b>	Procurement requirements ensure that the relevant standards as required in legislation is met.
<b>Risks</b>	Failure to adhere to procurement regulations could lead to legal challenge.